

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-12 EUR-12
ARA-10 /106 W
-----068206 031104Z /10

O 031010Z JUN 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6274
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 1155

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, XA, CU, UR
SUBJ: SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA

REF (A) BAGHDAD 784, 931, 1029 AND 1113 (NOTAL)
(B) STATE 136699

1. REFTELS EXPLORED DYNAMICS OF IRAQI-SOVIET-CUBAN
RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTICULAR RESPECT TO HORN OF AFRICA.

2. WHEREAS IRAQ APPEARS DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER CERTAIN
ASPECTS OF SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN HORN, ESPECIALLY IN
ERITREA, ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD REST OF AFRICA IS PROBABLY
DIFFERENT. FRICTION BETWEEN IRAQ AND ITS SOCIALIST
FRIENDS STEMS FROM LONGSTANDING COMMITMENTS TO AND ACTIVE
SUPPORT OF ARAB LIBERATION GROUPS OPPOSED TO ETHIOPIA.
ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA, IRAQI SUPPORT OF MANY LIBERATION
GROUPS COULD PULL IT IN OPPOSITE DIRECTION. MEDIA, AT
LEAST, HAVE TENDED TO SIDE WITH NETO REGIME IN ANGOLA
AGAINST ZAIRE. IN GENERAL, IRAQI RELATIONS WITH
CONSERVATIVE AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS VARY FROM
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NEGLEGIBLE TO POOR.

3. FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, INCLUDING CERTAIN
DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES WITH COMMUNISTS, RELATIONS
WITH THE SOVIET UNION ARE STRAINED AND WITH CUBA
UNCERTAIN. IRAQ HESITATES TO CONFRONT EITHER ONE,
HOWEVER, OVER ISSUES NOT CENTRAL TO IRAQ'S ECURITY OR

DIRECT INTERESTS. SOVIETS REMAIN IRAQ'S
PRIMARY BIG-POWER FRIEND, AND CUBA IS AN
IMPORTANT ALLY IN NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. GOI PROBABLY
VIEWS SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN NON-ARAB AFRICA
WITH RELATIVE EQUANIMITY, BUT GROWING CONCERN OF MANY
OTHER COUNTRIES COULD LEAD TO AN ALTERED PERSPECTIVE
HERE, OVER TIME AND ASSUMING THE CONCERNS WE EXPRESSED
DIRECTLY. THE ETHIOPIAN EXERCISE SHOULD HAVE HEIGHTENED
IRAQI AWARENESS OF PITFALLS AND PROBLEMS, BUT AS
YET WE SEE NO SIGNS OF SERIOUS ATTENTION BEING PAID TO
REMAINDER OF AFRICA.
PECK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BAGHDA01155
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780232-1060
Format: TEL
From: BAGHDAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197806100/aaaadhsc.tel
Line Count: 74
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7c11077c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BAGHDAD 784, 78 STATE 136699
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2134994
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA
TAGS: MPOL, XA, CU, UR, IZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7c11077c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014